**Review of Research Centres**

1. **Background**
   1. The Research Governance policy agreed by Academic Board in June 2013 states:

‘The School is …committed to managing research units through departments wherever possible, but will provide oversight of Research Centres through the School’s Research Committee where research and public engagement agendas stretch across departments.’ (para 1.1)

Details of the processes by which Research Committee should discharge its responsibility for oversight of Research Centres and Departmental Research Units are set out in the 2013 Research Governance paper (available at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/govResCen.pdf>).

1. **Reviews: aims and processes**
   1. Research Committee agreed how to improve the way Research Centres are periodically reviewed, taking into account feedback from the Research Centre Directors Forum.
   2. The Committee agreed that in reviewing Research Centres and other research units or entities the aims of the Research Committee’s review should be to assess the following:

* The extent to which research within Centre or unit is contributing to the LSE’s overall founding objective which is for the ‘betterment of society’;
* The quality of research being conducted;
* The extent to which the Centre or unit is engaged in the effective promotion of impact and engagement;
* The financial sustainability of the Centre or unit and its contribution to LSE funding.
  1. It was also agreed that reviews should include consideration of the career development of research staff within the Centre or unit, and of compliance with provisions on research ethics.

1. **Processes and timing of reviews**
   1. Interim monitoring will replace interim review, and occur every 2.5 years on average; the full 5 yearly review will remain but be reformed. In order to facilitate more meaningful and productive reviews, a core set of data will be produced centrally for both interim monitoring and the five yearly review (rather than requesting that Centres provide this information to the Committee). Annex A is the list of the types of data which will be provided along with an indication of which professional services division would be responsible for providing the information.
   2. During the review, Centres will be asked to confirm the data and to provide a qualitative commentary (including raising any issues) on 6 key areas:

* Future strategic direction
* Quality of research and publishing strategy
* Knowledge exchange and impact
* Financial viability
* Career development of research staff
* Research governance, integrity and ethics

Annex B is a template for requesting this qualitative commentary for both Full Reviews and Interim Monitoring.

3.3. Interim Monitoring by Research Committee will be conducted by the PDR and Director of Research Division who then report to Research Committee. The data set out in Annex A will be provided to Centres for their confirmation, for interim monitoring.

3.4 The purpose of the Interim Monitoring will be to confirm the quantitative data, to ensure that the Centre is taking forward the plans agreed in the previous Full Review and to bring to light any deviations or changes or other issues that have arisen since the last full review.

3.5 Full Reviews will be conducted by a small review team led by the PDR and comprising the Director of the Research Division and one or two members of the Research Committee. They may also involve others within the School or external members.

3.6 Full Reviews will occur every 5 years, as at present, with the continuing exception of ESRC centres which are subject to a modified review process, taking account of the monitoring they receive from the ESRC. In full reviews, meetings with research staff by the review team / PDR are included in order to discuss their perceptions on career development, research culture and expectations within the Centre.

3.7 The primary purpose of the Full Review will be to assist the development of the Centre, in terms of its strategy and goals, and identify potential improvements. In some cases, it may become apparent that the Centre no longer functions and/or has no sustainable funding; in which case the Committee can recommend to Academic Board the closure of the Centre as an entity.

3.8 Research Committee retains the ability to undertake a Full Review at any other period as it sees fit should it have concerns about the ability of the Centre to meet its objectives.

1. **Role of HODs in reviews of Research Centres**

4.1 The 2013 Research Governance paper provides (para 2.3.2) that HODs of the Departments to which Centres are affiliated should be ex officio members of its Management Committee. It is proposed that HODs should also be involved in the review of Centres. HODs will receive the set of core information prepared for each review for information. This in itself could be valuable for HODs in terms of understanding Centres under their purview and aiding them with REF preparations (one of the issues around the inclusion of research staff in the REF was a lack of information and consistency both at Departmental and School level relating to the names and contractual status of research staff in Centres associated with Departments).

4.2 As part of interim monitoring and full reviews, the monitoring or review team may hold a separate meeting with the head of the Department to which the Centre is affiliated about the Centre’s activities and relationship with the Department. The HOD would receive a copy of the previous review and monitoring reports and the data set out in Annex A. If necessary, a joint meeting between the HOD, Centre Director and members of the review team could be arranged.

Julia Black, David Coombe and Jo Hemmings

May 2015

**Annex A**

**Data to be provided centrally for Research Centre full reviews**

**Research quality data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Staff submitted to REF 2014 | RD (JH) |
| Citations for the most significant outputs produced by research staff and academic staff affiliated to the Centre, as identified by the Centre | Library (NC) |

**KEI data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ICSs submitted to REF 2014 generated by the Centre | RD (JH) |
| HEIF applications made and success rates (plus details of HEIF awards made) | RD (TB) |

**Staff data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Research staff: names, salary bands, FTE, funding source, start date of employment, whether their current contract is fixed term (if so, end date) or open ended, and whether their contract would make them eligible for the REF | HR (RH) |
| Academic staff affiliated to the Centre | Centres’ websites (JH) |
| Support staff: names, salary bands, FTE, funding source, start date of employment, whether current contract is fixed term (if so, end date) or open ended. | HR (RH) |
| Analysis of equality and diversity of staff including of salary bands and rates of promotion in the last 5 years | HR (RH) |
| Data on which research staff have received CDRs | HR (RH) |
| Data on which research staff have been considered for/ awarded promotion | HR (RH) |

**Financial data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full set of accounts, as agreed by RD, Finance Division and Planning Unit | RD (KF) |
| Research income per grant-funded researcher | RD (KF) |
| Grant applications and success rates | RD (AB) |
| Grants applied for and awaiting funding decision | RD (AB) |
| Current RIIF funds available to the Centre | RD (KF) |

**Research ethics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applications to the Research Ethics Committee over the last 5 years, with a summary of issues and outcomes | RD (LG) |

**Existing reports**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reports to funders | RD/ Centre |
| LSE internal audit reports where these have been conducted | Internal Audit |

**Data to be provided centrally for Research Centre interim monitoring**

**Staff data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Research staff: names, salary bands, FTE, funding source, start date of employment, whether their current contract is fixed term (if so, end date) or open ended, and whether their contract would make them eligible for the REF | HR (RH) |
| Academic staff affiliated to the Centre | Centres’ websites (JH) |
| Support staff: names, salary bands, FTE, funding source, start date of employment, whether current contract is fixed term (if so, end date) or open ended. | HR (RH) |
| Analysis of equality and diversity of staff including of salary bands and rates of promotion in the last 5 years | HR (RH) |

**Financial data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full set of accounts, as agreed by RD, Finance Division and Planning Unit | RD (KF) |
| Research income per grant-funded researcher | RD (KF) |
| Grant applications and success rates | RD (AB) |
| Grants applied for and awaiting funding decision | RD (AB) |
| Current RIIF funds available to the Centre | RD (KF) |

**Annex B**

**Research Centre Review Pro-forma for Full Reviews**

**Statement of purpose**

Research Committee is obliged to review all Research Centres on a regular basis. The principle aim is to establish the extent to which research within Centre is contributing to the LSE’s overall founding objective which is for the ‘betterment of society’ To that end, Research Centres are asked to provide information on the following areas:

* Future strategic direction
* Quality of research and publishing strategy
* Knowledge exchange and impact
* Financial viability
* Career development of research staff
* Research governance, integrity and ethics

While Research Committee needs evidence to support these requirements, Research Centres are not required to provide exhaustive lists of information: the highlights requested in the template below will suffice. The completed pro-forma should not exceed **12 pages** in length.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Centre** |  |
| **Centre Director** |  |

**Part A: Future strategic direction**

|  |
| --- |
| **i)** Please briefly describe the Centre’s primary objectives |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **ii)** Please describe the Centre's progress against targets and objectives set out in the previous Centre review. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **iii)** Please outline the major goals for the Centre over the next five years. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **iv)** What do you perceive to be most distinctive and innovative features of the Centre’s research programme and activities? |
|  |
| **v)** What do you perceive to be the most significant challenges the Centre faces now and over the next five years? |
|  |

**Part B: Quality of research and publishing strategy**

|  |
| --- |
| **vi)** What are the key research and publishing strategies of the Centre? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **vii)** What proportion of the Centre’s research staff do you envisage will have sufficient high quality research outputs to enable them to be submitted to any future REF exercise? How is the Centre supporting research staff on the new research staff career structure to produce research of outstanding quality published in, as a minimum, well recognised peer-reviewed outlets (Assistant Professorial Research Fellow) or even in top quality and well recognised international peer-reviewed outlets (Associate Professorial and Professorial Research Fellows)? |
|  |

**Part C: Knowledge exchange and impact**

|  |
| --- |
| **viii)** What kinds of knowledge exchange and impact activities does the Centre engage in and how are these funded? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **ix)** What are the most successful means that the Centre has used to engage with non-academic audiences in the research of the Centre and to develop impact over the last period? Please give two or three short examples. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **x)** What potential REF impact case studies for REF 2020 have you identified? How could the School support the Centre to develop these? |
|  |
| **xi)** What plans does the Centre have to further its knowledge engagement and impact activities over the next 3-5 years? |
|  |

**Part D: Financial viability**

|  |
| --- |
| **xii)** Please provide a full set of financial projections for the next five years including a funding strategy. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xiii)** What are the main ways in which the School currently   1. supports and facilitates the work of the Centre? 2. imposes limits or difficulties and what improvements would you suggest? |
| (a) |
| (b) |

|  |
| --- |
| **xiv)** Please outline any savings the Centre intends to make |
|  |

**Part E: Career development of research staff**

|  |
| --- |
| **xv)** Please comment on the career progression and mentoring of research staff in the Centre over the last 5 years, including but not limited to, those research staff who are on the New Research Staff Career track. |
|  |

**Part F: Governance, integrity and ethics**

|  |
| --- |
| **xvi)** Please describe your governance structure, succession planning, and evaluate the Centre’s relationship with its host Department / Institute. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xvii)** Do you have any separately identified and named sub-units in the Centre (e.g. anything with its own named section on the LSE website)? If so, what are these and what governance arrangements exist to manage these entities? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xviii)** What does the Centre do to ensure that all the research it conducts complies with the LSE research ethics policy and procedures, the Code of Research Conduct and the Ethics Code? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xvix)** What measures do you take to provide a high quality research environment for research staff and any PhD students the Centre may host? |
|  |

**Research Centre Review Pro-forma for Interim Reviews**

**Statement of purpose**

Research Committee is obliged to review all Research Centres on a regular basis. The principle aim is to establish the extent to which research within Centre is contributing to the LSE’s overall founding objective which is for the ‘betterment of society’. The interim review serves primarily to signal how the Centre is performing in relation to its last full review. To that end, Research Centres are asked to provide information on the following areas:

* Progress and future strategic direction
* Quality of research and publishing strategy
* Knowledge exchange and impact
* Financial viability
* Career development of research staff
* Research governance, integrity and ethics

While Research Committee needs evidence to support these requirements, Research Centres are not required to provide exhaustive lists of information: the highlights requested in the template below will suffice. The completed pro-forma should not exceed **8 pages** in length.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Centre** |  |
| **Centre Director** |  |

**Part A: Progress and future strategic direction**

|  |
| --- |
| **i)** Please briefly describe the Centre’s primary objectives |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **ii)** Please describe the Centre's progress against targets and objectives set out in the previous full review of the Centre. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **iii)** What do you perceive to be most distinctive and innovative features of the Centre’s research programme and activities? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **iv)** How have you been addressing the challenges you identified in the previous full review, and which issues still remain? |
|  |

**Part B: Quality of research and publishing strategy**

|  |
| --- |
| **v)** Have there been any changes in the key research and publishing strategies of the Centre? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **vi)** What proportion of the Centre’s research staff do you envisage will have sufficient high quality research outputs to enable them to be submitted to any future REF exercise? How is the Centre supporting research staff on the new research staff career structure to produce research of outstanding quality published in, as a minimum, well recognised peer-reviewed outlets (Assistant Professorial Research Fellow) or even in top quality and well recognised international peer-reviewed outlets (Associate Professorial and Professorial Research Fellows)? |
|  |

**Part C: Knowledge exchange and impact**

|  |
| --- |
| **vii)** What kinds of knowledge exchange and impact activities does the Centre engage in and how are these funded? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **viii)** What are the most successful means that the Centre has used to engage with non-academic audiences in the research of the Centre and to develop impact over the last period? Please give two or three short examples. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **ix)** What potential REF impact case studies for REF 2020 have you identified? How could the School support the Centre to develop these? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **x)** What plans does the Centre have to further its knowledge engagement and impact activities over the next 3-5 years? |
|  |

**Part D: Financial viability**

|  |
| --- |
| **xi)** Please provide a full set of financial projections for the next five years including a funding strategy. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xii)** What are the main ways in which the School currently   1. supports and facilitates the work of the Centre? 2. imposes limits or difficulties and what improvements would you suggest? |
| (a) |
| (b) |

|  |
| --- |
| **xiii)** Please outline any savings the Centre intends to make |
|  |

**Part E: Career development of research staff**

|  |
| --- |
| **xiv)** Please comment on the career progression and mentoring of research staff in the Centre since the last full review, including but not limited to, those research staff who are on the New Research Staff Career track. |
|  |

**Part F: Governance, integrity and ethics**

|  |
| --- |
| **xv)** Please describe any changes to your governance structure, succession planning, and evaluate the Centre’s relationship with its host Department / Institute since the last full review. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xvi)** Do you have any separately identified and named sub-units in the Centre (e.g. anything with its own named section on the LSE website)? If so, what are these and what governance arrangements exist to manage these entities? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xvii)** What does the centre do to ensure that all the research it conducts complies with the LSE research ethics policy and procedures, the Code of Research Conduct and the Ethics Code? |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **xviii)** What measures do you take to provide a high quality research environment for research staff and any PhD students the Centre may host? |
|  |